

DETAILED ACTION

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

Claims 1-6, 22-23, 25 and 30 are allowed.

The prior art does not teach or suggest a fuel cell system including all of the claimed features. The most pertinent art includes Horiguchi et al. (U.S. Patent 6,696,985 B2). However, the present application and the Horiguchi reference (U.S. 6,896,985) were, at the time the invention was made, owned by, or subject to an obligation of assignment to, Kabushiki Kaisha Equos Research (the assignee of the present application and U.S. 6,896,985). Therefore, Horiguchi is disqualified as prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(c).

For these reasons, the claims are allowed over the prior art. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ben Lewis whose telephone number is 571-272-6481. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30am - 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick Ryan can be reached on 571-272-1292. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Ben Lewis/
Examiner, Art Unit 1795

/PATRICK RYAN/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1795